

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 8860

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, BR, PO
SUBJECT: SOARES VISIT TO BRAZIL: SHORT ON SPECIFICS

REFS: (A) LISBON 8735 (DTG 210956Z DEC 76)
(B) LISBON 8641 (DTG 151822Z DEC 76)

SUMMARY: MARIO SOARES'S DEC 15-21 VISIT TO BRAZIL
WAS SUCCESSFUL IN THAWING COOL RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL,
BUT FAILED TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS ON PLACE-
MENT OF AFRICAN RETURNEES OR OTHER TECHNICAL
ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

1. FOREIGN RELATIONS IMPACT: PRIME MINISTER
MARIO SAORES AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO ACCOMPANIED
HIM STRESSED IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS THE
OVERALL IMPROVEMENT ACHIEVED IN RELATIONS WITH
BRAZIL. SOARES CITED HIS CONVERSATION WITH
PRESIDENT GEISEL AS THE TURNING POINT IN CREATING
A RECEPTIVE BRAZILIAN ATTITUDE. SOARES SAID
THAT GREATER BRAZILIAN RECEPTIVITY OPENED THE WAY
FOR PROGRESS IN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL
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RELATIONS. IN MEETINGS WITH BRAZILIANS AND THE
PORTUGUESE COMMUNITY, SOARES EMPHASIZED THAT HE
HAD ISOLATED THE COMMUNIST THREAT IN PORTUGAL. PORTUGUESE
OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT, DESPITE THE HOSTILITY
OF MANY PORTUGUESE IN BRAZIL, CONCRETE PROGRESS
WAS MADE TOWARD IMPROVING THE SOARES GOVERNMENT'S

IMAGE IN THE LARGE PORTUGUESE COMMUNITY. HOW
MANY PORTUGUESE TECHNICIANS WILL HEED SOARES'S APPEAL
TO RETURN IS LESS CERTAIN.

2. SHORT ON SPECIFICS: PORTUGAL FAILED TO
INCREASE THE NUMBERS OF AFRICAN RETURNEES PLACED IN BRAZIL.
ACCORDING TO A FONOFF SOURCE, BRAZIL AGREED ONLY TO
MAINTAIN EXISTING IMMIGRATION ACCORDS AND TO ACCEPT MORE
PORTUGUESE RETURNEES IF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE
WAS PROVIDED. STATE SECRETARY TO THE PRIME
MINISTER, VITOR CUNHA REGO/ SAID HE EXPECTED
SIGNIFICANT COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS
TO BE SIGNED IN 1977. IN ADDITION:
-- PRESIDENT EANES WILL VISIT BRAZIL IN 1977 AND
PRESIDENT GEISEL WILL RETURN THE VISIT TO PORTUGAL
AT AN UNSPECIFIED TIME.
-- A "HOT LINE" WAS SET UP BETWEEN BRASILIA AND
LISBON.
-- PROGRESS WAS MADE TOWARD RESOLVING OUTSTANDING
BRAZILIAN INVESTMENT DISPUTES AND AN INTER-
GOVERNMENTAL GROUP FOR RECIPROCAL INVESTMENTS
WAS CREATED.
-- A 50 MILLION DOLLAR BRAZILIAN EXPORT CREDIT WAS
ESTABLISHED; PORTUGAL WILL ESTABLISH SIMILAR
CREDITS FOR BRAZIL.
-- THE GETULIO VARGAS INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION WILL PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE
PORTUGUESE NATIONAL CIVIL ENGINEERING LABORATORY.
-- THE JOINT CULTURAL COMMITTEE WILL MEET FOR THE
FIRST TIME SINCE 1971; EXCHANGES WILL BE RESUMED
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IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCES.

3. DOMESTIC EFFECTS: SOARES'S BRAZIL TRIP
RECEIVED HEAVY PUBLICITY IN PORTUGAL, AND PROVED
CONTROVERSIAL. THE COMMUNISTS WERE
PARTICULARLY DISSATISFIED THAT SOARES HIT
THEM SO HARD WHILE IN BRAZIL. SOARES'S REQUENT
ASSERTIONS THAT HE WOULD NOT INTERFERE IN INTERNAL
BRAZILIAN AFFAIRS BEY BRINGING UP THE
POLITICAL PRISONER ISSUE WAS ANOTHER AGGRAVATION TO
THE PORTUGUESE LEFT. SOARES ALSO DEMONSTRATED
TO THE PORTUGUESE RIGHT THAT BRAZIL ACCEPTS HIS
SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT.

4. COMMENT: WHILE SOARES HAD HOPED FOR GREATER
PROGRESS IN PLACING AFRICAN RETURNEES AND IN
ENCOURAGING THE RETURN OF PORTUGUESE TECHNICIANS,
HE DID ACCOMPLISH HIS MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE:

IMPROVING COOL RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL. THE
PORTUGUESE HOPE THAT THEY HAVE STABLISHED A
BETTER BASIS NOW FOR SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS WITH
BRAZIL.
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